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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 001419

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP AND NEA/ARPI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/11/2014

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ELAB](#) [PHUM](#) [KMPI](#) [KCRM](#) [KDEM](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: LABOR MINISTER WELCOMES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Classified By: Ambassador William T. Monroe for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) In an introductory meeting on September 11, Minister of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) Majeed bin Mohsin Al Alawi explained to the Ambassador that his portfolio included labor reform, vocational training, unemployment, facilities for the disabled, occupational safety inspections and enforcement, and labor complaints. Al Alawi added that the King had assigned him to be the GOB point of contact in the constitutional dialogue with the four main opposition parties.

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Status of Terrorism Suspects  
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2. (C) Al Alawi asked about the status of the Navy dependents. The Ambassador replied that the Navy will continue to evaluate its position on dependents in Bahrain, looking closely at the security situation here. In that connection, he stated that we are very interested to see how the GOB handles investigation of the six terrorism suspects.

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Constitutional Dialogue  
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3. (C) Al Alawi said that talks resumed on September 11 with the four main opposition societies (Al Wefaq National Islamic Society, National Democratic Action Society, Al Amal Al Islami and Al Tajamu Al Watani) in an attempt to resolve constitutional issues concerning the process of introducing and passing legislation. Al Alawi remarked that members of the opposition societies need to run for parliamentary office if they want to make changes to the constitution. He said he is being careful not to set a precedent by offering to amend the constitution outside of the parliamentary process. He complained that the opposition societies continually solicit the King's involvement to change the constitution so that the elected lower house of parliament (Nuwab Council) can secure more legislative power than the appointed upper house (Shura Council). Al Alawi told the Ambassador that the King had decided not to get directly involved in this dialogue. He stated that this dialogue will not produce any changes to the constitution through channels outside of the legislative branch.

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Training and Technical Assistance  
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4. (C) PolOff informed the Minister that the Foundation for Global Leadership's trainers will be in Bahrain December 9-22 to train MOLSA hotline telephone operators and volunteers from the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights on dealing with foreign laborers who experience problems in Bahrain. The Minister thanked the USG for funding this training and welcomed any technical assistance projects that would help improve the GOB's labor climate.

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Licensing International NGOs  
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5. (C) In response to the Ambassador's inquiry, Al Alawi referred us to MOLSA Director of NGO Management Badrea Al Jeeb to work on registration for the MEPI-funded National Democratic Institute (NDI) project. Al Alawi added that NDI will need to complete an application and submit a copy of its by-laws for processing. The Minister remarked that the GOB has been very pleased with NDI Program Manager Fawzi Guleid but cautioned that the GOB considers his work with the opposition to be a sensitive issue, especially during this time of constitutional dialogue.

MONROE